Administration of Village Panchayets during the year 1938-39.

READ—

Letter No. C. Per A. 44—38-39, dated the 8th October 1939, from the Revenue Commissioner in Mysore, submitting the report on the working of the several Village Panchayets in the State for the year 1938-39.

ORDER NO. L. 4635-58—V. P. 32-39-2, DATED BANGALORE, THE 11—16TH NOVEMBER 1939.

Recorded.

2. *Constitution.*—The total number of Village Panchayets at the end of the year was 11,845 (11,843). The number of Chairmen elected by the Panchayets was 493 (485) and the total number of members was 89,183 (88,901).

3. *Finance.*—The Village Panchayets had a cash balance of Rs. 32,17,825 at the beginning of the year. The total income and expenditure of the Panchayets amounted to Rs. 8,43,559 (Rs. 11,13,859) and Rs. 13,58,082 (Rs. 10,81,173) respectively, leaving a cash balance of Rs. 27,03,302 at the close of the year. The decrease in income is said to be due to unfavourable seasonal conditions.

According to the new Rural Water Supply Scheme sanctioned by Government an allotment of Rs. 3 lakhs was made during the year for sinking drinking water wells in villages. The total allotment for the improvement of villages was Rs. 1,10,000.

4. *Demand, Collection and Balance.*—The arrears outstanding recovery at the beginning of the year amounted to Rs. 42,91,699 and the demand during the year was Rs. 12,85,649 (Rs. 13,94,218). A sum of Rs. 9,91,503 (Rs. 13,33,119) was realised during the year inclusive of remission, etc., leaving a balance of Rs. 45,85,845 for recovery at the end of the year. The arrears in the Districts of Bangalore (Rs. 6,10,964), Tumkur (Rs. 8,68,926), Mysore (Rs. 15,68,189) and Hassan (Rs. 5,26,888) continue to be heavy and account for more than three-fourths of the arrears for the whole State. In 35 Taluks, the arrears exceed Rs. 50,000 and in the Taluks of Nanjangud (Rs. 1,93,377), Chamarajnagar (Rs. 1,75,854), Tumkur (Rs. 1,71,910), Gubbi (Rs. 1,41,558), Krishnarajpet (1,39,937), Arsikere (Rs. 1,32,173), Bangalore (Rs.1,26,270) and Nagamangala (Rs. 1,26,057), the arrears are very heavy. It is very unsatisfactory to note that the local officers have not devoted any special attention to the collection work. Though the Village Panchayet Act and the rules framed thereunder have been amended making the Revenue Officers responsible for the collection of Village Panchayet taxes, the officers have not applied themselves seriously to this important item of work. They are requested to show better progress in the collection work and to see that the arrears are reduced as far as possible.

5. *Expenditure.*—The total expenditure incurred by the Village Panchayets during the year was Rs. 13,58,082 (Rs. 10,81,173). A sum of Rs. 3,96,997 (Rs. 3,69,004) was spent on public works. Forty-four (thirty) Sub-Overseers worked in the several Districts for the execution of both village improvement and Well Works. Besides these, one Sub-overseer was entertained solely for the execution of inter-village communications and other improvement works in the Irwin Canal area. The amount spent by the Panchayets under Conservancy and Sanitation was Rs. 62,535 (Rs. 54,560). Many Panchayets maintained establishments for sweeping and scavenging and the Bilikere Village Panchayet in Hunsur Taluk maintained a cart for removing the sweepings of the village. A good many Village Panchayets constructed or improved the existing drains, laid out improved manure pits, effected repairs to streets and approach roads, laid out village extensions and attended to other improvement works, such as clearing of rank vegetation, filling up of insanitary pits, etc. The construction of houses for the use of the Adikarnatakas was completed in Belagola Village, Seringapatam Taluk, and in Neelakantanahalli, Chennapatna Taluk. A sum of Rs. 4,26,736 (Rs. 2,76,205) was spent for water supply and maintenance charges. According to the new Rural Water Supply Scheme as many as 2,337 well works were programmed for the year, of which 577 wells were completed, while a number of well works were in various stages of progress at the end of the year. Wells have so far been provided in 12,018 inhabited villages in the State, of which 1,503 villages have separate wells for the Adikarnatakas.

6. *Other Activities of the Village Panchayets.*—The system of weekly labour continued to be popular and the approximate value of work turned out during the year under this system is reported to be Rs. 1,22,859.

Sixty-six Village Panchayets have obtained sanction of Government so far to levy optional taxes in their villages.

The provision of medical relief continued to be one of the main activities of the Panchayets. Quinine pills and other country medicines were distributed freely. One hundred and sixty-three Village Panchayets contributed a sum of Rs. 8,841 towards the maintenance of Ayurvedic and Unani Vydyasalas. The amount contributed to the Indian Red Cross Society was Rs. 6,507.

One hundred and thirty-eight villages have been provided with electric lights. Forty-one Village Panchayets are using electric power for agricultural purposes and 22 for industrial purposes. Four hundred and fifty-six Village Panchayets are using improved implements and better variety of seeds. Better farming methods were demonstrated in several villages. Breeding bulls are maintained by 301 Village Panchayets. Seventy village schools, 46 Muzrai institutions, 11 tanks, 62 topes and 137 village forests were under the management of the Village Panchayets. One hundred and sixty-two Village Panchayets have laid out parks, 145 Village Panchayets are maintaining fruit gardens and 815 Village Panchayets have planted fruit and shade trees in their villages. With a view to encourage the Panchayets to take active interest in the development of fruit cultivation, Government have issued orders empowering the Revenue Commissioner to grant an extent not exceeding six acres of dry and two acres of wet land to deserving Village Panchayets free of cost for the planting of fruit trees. Eight hundred and six Village Panchayets are maintaining either libraries or reading rooms. Many useful books, magazines and newspapers are being subscribed for by the Panchayets. Government have issued orders for instructing all Panchayets to set apart a sum of Rs. 5 per annum for forming a library and to arrange for weekly reading of lessons from the books in the library.

The scheme for the improvement of grass lands in villages by providing them with simple working plans and giving them suitable grants is being worked in certain select villages. Goat-keeping and rearing has been introduced in certain villages as an experimental measure. The purchase of three radio sets was sanctioned by Government for use in the Kolar and Tumkur Districts. Model thandas of the Banajara community have been formed in 15 places.

District Conferences were held in all the districts. These conferences were attended by a large number of delegates and the members evinced keen interest in the proceedings during which important subjects affecting the well-being of the rural population were discussed. Exhibitions were also held as adjuncts to the District Conferences at Kolar, Tumkur, Hassan and Kadur. Taluk Conferences were held in all the Taluks and Hobli Conferences were organised in all the Taluks of the Hassan District. A Raiyats' Conference at Keregode, Mandya Taluk, and a Harijan Conference at Madhugiri were also organised during the year.

7. *Rural Welfare Centres.*—The scheme for organising concentrated propaganda was in operation in 234 select villages. The Rural Welfare Centre at Closepet continued to do good work and their Excellencies the Viceroy and the Vicereine visited the Centre. An exhibition was also organised to demonstrate the several activities that are being carried on at the centre.

The Rural Reconstruction Centre at Dodballapur under the management of the National Council of the Young Men's Christian Association continued to work during the year. The question of taking it over under Government management is under the consideration of Government.

8. As in previous years, many non-official gentlemen continued to take keen interest in the working of the Panchayets and made liberal donations for many beneficial measures such as dispensaries, maternity homes, schools, roads and other works of public utility.

C. SUBRAHMANYA AIYAR,
Secretary to Government,
Law Department.

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